



THIRTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL AND RELATED SESSIONAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS: 4-9 NOVEMBER 2002

The thirty-third session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC-33) will meet from 4-9 November 2002, in Yokohama, Japan. The session will address the renegotiation of the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) and emerging international trade issues of relevance to the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO); forest law enforcement in Africa and in the context of sustainable timber production; the role of phased approaches to certification as a tool to promote sustainable forest management (SFM); ITTO's role in international and regional organizations and fora; progress on establishing a database of statistics on trade in bamboo and rattan; promoting SFM in the Congo Basin; the 2003 work programme; progress on achieving the Year 2000 Objective; review of, and contributions, to the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund; and the Fellowship Programme.

The 31st sessions of the ITTC's Committees on Economic Information and Market Intelligence (CEM), Reforestation and Forest Management (CRF), and Forest Industry (CFI) will also meet to, *inter alia*: consider reports on completed projects and pre-projects; conduct ex-post evaluations; review projects, pre-projects and activities in progress; consider project and pre-project proposals; and discuss policy work. The ITTC's Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA) will convene its 12th session to review, *inter alia*: the draft Administrative Budget for 2003; contributions to the Administrative Budgets for 1986-2002; the status of the Administrative Account under the 2002 Budget; arrearages of Members to the Administrative Budget; the status of the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund; and appointment of auditors for 2003.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ITTA

The International Tropical Timber Agreement was negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The ITTA negotiations were aimed at: providing an effective framework for cooperation and consultation between countries producing and consuming tropical timber; promoting the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber and the improvement of structural conditions in the tropical timber market; promoting and supporting research and development to improve forest management and wood utilization;

and encouraging the development of national policies for the sustainable utilization and conservation of tropical forests and their genetic resources, and maintaining the ecological balance in the regions concerned.

The ITTA was adopted on 18 November 1983, in Geneva, and entered into force on 1 April 1985. It remained in force for an initial period of five years and was extended twice for two-year periods. The Agreement was renegotiated in 1993-1994. The Successor Agreement to the ITTA (ITTA, 1994) was adopted on 26 January 1994 and entered into force on 1 January 1997. The ITTA, 1994 contains broader provisions for information sharing, including non-tropical timber trade data, allows for consideration of non-tropical timber issues as they relate to tropical timber, and includes the Year 2000 Objective to enhance members' capacity to implement a strategy for achieving exports of tropical timber and timber products from sustainably managed sources by the year 2000. The new agreement also established the Bali Partnership Fund meant to assist producing members in achieving the Year 2000 Objective. The ITTA, 1994 was extended for a three-year period ending on 31 December 2003.

The ITTA, 1985 established the International Tropical Timber Organization, headquartered in Yokohama, Japan, which provides a framework for tropical timber producer and consumer countries to discuss, exchange information and develop policies on issues relating to international trade in, and utilization of, tropical timber and the sustainable management of its resource base. The ITTO has 57 members divided into two caucuses: producer countries (31 members) and consumer countries (25 members, including European Community States). The ITTO membership represents 95% of world trade in tropical timber and covers 75% of the world's tropical forests.

The governing body of the ITTO is the International Tropical Timber Council, which includes all members. Four committees advise and assist the Council on issues for consideration and decision: the CEM, CRF, and CFI deal with the ITTO's major areas of work, and the CFA considers financial and administrative matters concerning the ITTO's management. The CEM, CFM and CFI are supported by an Expert Panel for the Technical Appraisal of Projects and Pre-projects, which reviews project proposals. Since 1998, the Council is also advised by an Informal Advisory Group (IAG).

ITTC-31: The 31st session of the ITTC met in Yokohama, Japan, from 29 October-3 November 2001. At the session, members pledged US\$8.96 million to fund new work designed to promote tropical forest conservation and sustainable development,

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and the Council approved and financed several projects. The Council also made decisions on: strengthening forest law enforcement in member countries requesting assistance; convening a workshop to further develop a draft workplan on mangrove forest ecosystems; establishing a database of statistics on the trade of bamboo and rattan; and assisting countries to develop auditing systems for the implementation of ITTO's criteria and indicators for SFM.

ITTC-32: The ITTC held its 32nd session in Bali, Indonesia, from 13-18 May 2002. The Council established a civil society advisory group (CSAG) to facilitate input and participation of civil society organizations in projects and during Council sessions. Regarding preparations for renegotiations of the ITTA, 1994, members requested the ITTO Executive Secretary to appoint two consultants to identify emerging issues in international trade, including market trends in tropical timber, the role of certification for sustainable tropical forest management, forest law enforcement and forest environmental services. The Council also adopted decisions on: the ITTO's contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD); improving the efficiency of the ITTO's organization of work; sustainable management and conservation of mangrove forest ecosystems, including a revised Mangrove Workplan; guidelines for the restoration, management and rehabilitation of degraded and secondary tropical forests; improving forest law enforcement in Africa, through, *inter alia*, undertaking a data collection initiative to improve forest concession management and help ensure the conservation of protected areas; promoting SFM in the Congo Basin through participating in Type II partnerships and developing a regional strategy with particular attention to the impact of industrial logging on local communities and transboundary sites of high priority for biodiversity; and certification, including undertaking a study on the potential of phased approaches to certification as a tool to promote SFM. Member States pledged US\$8.129 million to fund selected projects and pre-projects, and the Council approved 19 projects and 10 pre-projects. The Council also approved 28 applications to the ITTO Fellowship Programme.

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

AFRICA FOREST LAW ENFORCEMENT AND GOVERNANCE (AFLEG) MINISTERIAL PLANNING MEETING: The AFLEG Ministerial Planning Meeting took place in Brazzaville, The Republic of Congo, from 18-20 June 2002, to: share knowledge and experience on forests law enforcement and governance (FLEG) in Africa and globally; identify priority issues; prepare the AFLEG Ministerial Conference; and develop recommendations for a ministerial declaration on FLEG for African forests. Participants addressed, *inter alia*: community forestry; intra-African trade in timber; illegal forest practices; poaching; legal frameworks; information; conflict and post-conflict situations; and capacity-building.

PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE CONGO BASIN INITIATIVE/LAUNCH OF THE CONGO BASIN PARTNERSHIP: The Preparatory Meeting for the Congo Basin Initiative was held in Brazzaville, The Republic of Congo, on 20-21 June 2002. The meeting was facilitated by the US Government to prepare a proposal on the Congo Basin Partnership launched during the WSSD as a Type II Partnership. The Partnership aims at supporting a network of effectively managed national parks, protected areas and well-managed forestry concessions, and promoting economic development, poverty alleviation and

improved governance. Proposed ITTO actions under the Partnership include: increasing ITTO-financed SFM demonstration areas; supporting regional training institutions and training on reduced impact logging; a data collection/assessment initiative on forest concession management and conservation of protected areas; assisting development of an applied research programme focusing on social, economic and environmental aspects of tropical forest management and trade; assisting enhancement of forest law enforcement; and assisting planning and financing the expansion of totally protected areas in selected countries.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (WSSD): The WSSD took place in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002. Participants adopted a Plan of Implementation and a Political Declaration that include elements relevant to the ITTO on, *inter alia*: sustainable consumption and production patterns, including corporate environmental and social responsibility and accountability; internalization of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments; the functioning of, and transparency and information on energy markets; regional cooperation for promoting cross-border energy trade; managing the natural resource base, including reducing biodiversity loss by 2010, and taking immediate action on domestic forest law enforcement and illegal international trade in forest production; desertification; trade, including technical assistance and capacity building, environmental impact assessments, and enhancing mutual supportiveness between trade, environment and development; and institutional framework, including integrating sustainable development into the international trade regimes and enhancing partnerships involving all major groups.

ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE INFORMAL ADVISORY GROUP (IAG): The IAG held its 11th meeting on 3 November 2002, prior to ITTC-33. The IAG discussed, *inter alia*: the need for further consideration of actions and strategies regarding timber certification; the report of the intersessional Working Group on the Organization of Work convened by ITTC-32; and preparations for renegotiating ITTA, 1994. The IAG also proposed possible decisions to be considered and adopted by ITTC-33 on: projects, pre-projects and activities; organization of work of the Council and Committees; process and calendar for renegotiating the ITTA; extension of the ITTA, 1994; the work programme for 2003; forest fires; the Congo Basin Initiative; forest law enforcement and governance; and management of the administrative budget.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

COUNCIL SESSION: The opening session of the Council will start at 10:00 in the Plenary Hall to, *inter alia*, hear reports and start discussions on: matters relating to Article 46 of the ITTA, 1994 on duration, extension and termination of the agreement; organization of work under ITTA, 1994; and the ITTO Annual Work Programme.

JOINT COMMITTEE SESSION: A Joint Committee Session will convene from 15:00 to 15:30 in the Plenary Hall.

COMMITTEE SESSIONS: The CFI and the CFA will meet from 15:30 to 16:30, in the Plenary Hall and the Committee Room, respectively. The CRF and the CEM will convene from 16:30 to 18:30 in the Plenary Hall and the Committee Room, respectively.

PRODUCER AND CONSUMER GROUP MEETINGS: The Producer Group will meet in the Plenary Hall and the Consumer Group in the Committee Room, both from 14:00 to 15:00.